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# QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

# FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

## Letter dated 16 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the fifty-third session of the Commission on Human Rights

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16 June 1997

I have been instructed to call your attention to an ominous series of events which occurred in the last month, in which three Palestinians were abducted and brutally murdered in the Jerusalem and Ramallah areas. These murders were carried out in almost identical circumstances and manner, and a further potential murder was foiled by intervention of the Israel police.

Each of these acts of terror was perpetrated against individuals who had been involved in bona fide real estate transactions with Israelis. Two of the murder victims were Palestinians holding Israeli identity cards, as was the individual whose abduction and murder were averted.

Regrettably, these abductions and murders were preceded, and given public justification, by a wave of incitement by high-ranking Palestinian officials, advocating violent action against persons selling real estate to Israelis, and even going so far as to declare that such transactions are treason and punishable by death.

Both the circumstances of the incitement and subsequent abductions and murders, which are clearly connected, represent flagrant violations of human rights, of the rule of law and of civilized norms. They constitute an assault on the fundamental tenets of the Middle East peace process - to foster mutual trust and cooperation and to create a basis for close and amicable relations between the Palestinians and Israel.

Israel is appalled by these murders. It urges the Commission on Human Rights to condemn this phenomenon and to call upon the Palestinian leadership to take the necessary steps, unequivocally and publicly, to put an end to it.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as an official document of the Commission, under agenda items 4 and 9.

I avail myself, Excellency, of this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Yosef Lamdan
Ambassador
Permanent Representative